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Guidelines for Algae and Cyanobacteria in Fresh Water
 (from [WHO Guidelines for Safe Recreational Water Environments \(PDF\)](#),
 Table 8.3, Guidelines for Safe Practice in Managing Recreational Waters, page 150)

Probability of Adverse Health Effects	Guidance Level or Situation	How Guidance Level Derived	Health Risks	Typical Actions
Relatively low	20,000 cyanobacterial cells/ml or 10 µg chlorophyll-a/liter with dominance of cyanobacteria	From human bathing epidemiological study	Short-term adverse health outcomes, e.g., skin irritations, gastrointestinal illness	Post on-site risk advisory signs Inform relevant authorities
Moderate	100,000 cyanobacterial cells/ml or 50 µg chlorophyll-a/liter with dominance of cyanobacteria	From provisional drinking-water guideline value for microcystin-LR [= 1 µg/L] and data concerning other cyanotoxins	Potential for long-term illness with some cyanobacterial species Short-term adverse health outcomes, e.g., skin irritations, gastrointestinal illness	Watch for scums or conditions conducive to scums Discourage swimming and further investigate hazard Post on-site risk advisory signs Inform relevant authorities
High	Cyanobacterial scum formation in areas where whole-body contact and/or risk of ingestion/aspiration occur	Inference from oral animal lethal poisonings Actual human illness case histories	Potential for acute poisoning Potential for long-term illness with some cyanobacterial species Short-term adverse health outcomes, e.g., skin irritations, gastrointestinal illness	Immediate action to control contact with scums; possible prohibition of swimming and other water contact activities Public health follow-up investigation Inform public and relevant authorities

*Actual action taken should be determined in light of extent of use and public health assessment of hazard.